

Your County, Your Government

Remembering the Storm that Changed our County



Fact Sheet #15
September 16, 2009



Hurricane Ivan Retrospect- Five Years Later

September 16 marks five years since Hurricane Ivan. The memorable storm hit at approximately 2:02 a.m. on a Tuesday morning in 2004 and devastated the county with over 23,000 housing units, or 47 percent of the homes, damaged or destroyed. The aftermath of Ivan dramatically affected residents and county government alike. Ivan taught us many lessons.

Although no storm or its aftermath can be predicted, Santa Rosa County Emergency Management has taken numerous steps to improve and implement new operations so we can all be more prepared when the next disaster strikes. A few examples of the changes made to ensure you have the information and services during any type of disaster include:

Lesson Learned

Communication Failure



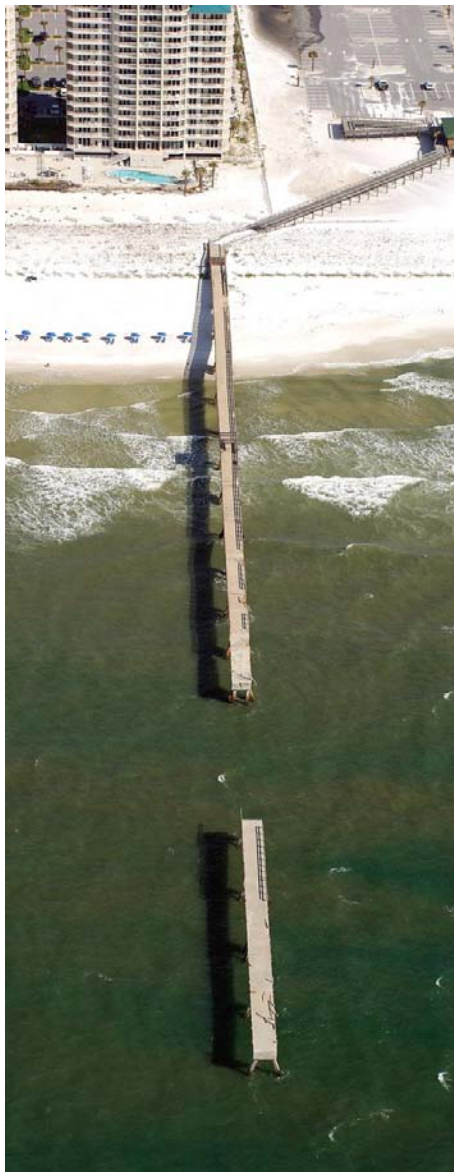
Improvements

Benefits to Residents

New permanent and portable cellular towers and walkie-talkie service.	Helps maintain communication for officials, staff and responders, which increases their ability to respond to community needs.
Website backup has been implemented from an out of town location to ensure Web access.	Maintains internet capabilities to provide up-to-date information to residents in or out of the county.
Forged relationship with Lamar Advertising to utilize an electronic billboard in the south end of the county.	Provides an additional and immediate tool to relay important information to residents and visitors traveling on US Hwy. 98.
Electronic message boards were purchased and additional message boards have been identified, if needed.	Additional tool to display important messages placed strategically throughout the county.
System for informational handouts at points of distribution locations if a major communications loss occurs was created.	Ensures communication flow from the EOC when traditional communication methods fail.
Media allowed to embed and a media room created to accommodate their needs.	Working with the media, the community will receive prompt information regarding safety of life and property.
Created a text messaging system called "E-Breaking News."	Citizens can sign up to receive alerts on emergency or other information that may affect daily life.
Partnership formed with Mediacom that gives the county the ability to override channel 27 with important safety information.	Provides residents with an additional outlet to receive important emergency messages.
New REVERSE 911® system purchased that enables the county to call homes and businesses in specific areas to alert them during an emergency.	Citizens that may be affected by a disaster in a targeted area can receive specialized notification.
Partnership with the Weather Channel to display disaster information on the "crawl" found at the bottom of your TV Screen.	Provides residents with an additional outlet to receive important emergency messages.

Lesson Learned

Limited Resources



Improvements

Benefits to Residents

Addition of two emergency management staff positions.	Allows emergency management to focus daily on planning, preparedness, response and recovery for all hazards. Also allows staff to provide more public awareness presentations and maintain better relationships with disaster partners.
County staff and designated representatives assigned to EOC stations.	Allows for better training of EOC staff, improves internal communications which in turn provides better response for citizens.
Increased training which is now held year round, including full scale disaster drills for numerous types of disasters that may affect our county.	Disaster responders are able to learn, develop working relationships before a disaster and are better prepared to assist residents.
Creation of Grand Central Station, a communication sharing software for emergency responders working in the EOC.	Enables EOC staff to communicate quickly and better assess and respond to the community's needs.
Faith-based Partner Group created to coordinate disaster response efforts.	Expands the county's capacity to quickly respond to our residents' needs by reducing our dependency on outside help which can often take days to arrive.
A business continuity emergency support function was created to provide better communication with business.	More accurate information relayed to residents about what businesses are open and what supplies they have available including food, water and gas.
Identified facilities to be used during disasters and manpower, both county and volunteers, to run the facilities.	Predetermines appropriateness and adequacy of physical facilities to be used as response and recovery resources.
Created SAFER or the Support Alliance for Emergency Readiness, an organization of businesses, non-profits, individuals and government agencies that help in recovery efforts after a disaster.	Expands the county's capacity to quickly respond to our residents' needs by reducing our dependency on outside help which can often take days to arrive.
Established warehouse space required for a County Staging Area for relief supplies and equipment.	Resources can be stored before a disaster strikes, drastically reducing the time needed to get the resources to our citizens.
Pre-identified companies and pre-bid disaster services with contractors which are reviewed yearly.	Ensures adequate resources are available, which helps reduce response time for the community.
Satellite phones installed at the emergency operations center.	Ensures communication if landline and cell phone service is lost.
Added additional shelters around the county, including a new Pet Friendly Shelter.	Provides last resort shelter space for residents who cannot go to other safe locations.
Adopted the National Incident Management System and restructured the emergency operations center.	Allows agencies that have similar missions sitting together as a group to increase communication and effectiveness.
Increased training, supervision and created scripted questions for Citizen Information Center staff.	Facilitates two-way communication with residents, helps identify needs and provides direct, correct, and consistent information.

Ivan's Wrath Facts

Tropical Storm Force Winds Hurricane Winds Eye Landfall	7 a.m., Wednesday, September 15 2 p.m., Wednesday, September 15 2:02 a.m., Thursday, September 16
Evacuation Numbers	Over 30,000 residents are estimated to have evacuated
Shelters	An estimated 1,000 people utilized county shelters
Peak Wind Gusts	107 MPH at NAS Pensacola
Highest Tides	12.92 feet at Escambia Bay West Bank at U.S. Hwy. 90
Inches of Rain (48 hour totals)	15.79 inches
9-1-1 Calls Answered During Peak Risk Period	1,778 (Normal 290 a day)
Access to Navarre Beach closed	6:00 a.m., Wednesday, September 15
Access to Navarre Beach Open	To residents only, no vehicles September 27
Amount of Debris Removed	7.71 Million Cubic Yards
Estimated County Debris Removal Expenditures	\$42.14 Million
Estimated Amount to be Refunded by FEMA for Debris Removal	\$40.79 Million
Storm Related Deaths	2
Number of Gulf Power Customers Without Service	60,270

Improving Safety and Recovery Through Aggressive Mitigation

As a result of Hurricane Ivan, Santa Rosa County has received approval for approximately \$10 million in hazard mitigation projects of which the county has a 25 percent match. Some examples include shuttering of seven county buildings, elevation of ten lift station electrical control panels on Navarre Beach, and Phase I engineering for seven large scale stormwater/drainage improvement projects in the south end of the county. Phase II Construction is anticipated to begin on these seven projects in 2010.



What is Emergency Management?

The Emergency Management Division is responsible for work in the development, implementation and management of county-wide disaster prevention, preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation. It is responsible for the County's all-hazard Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan and coordinates the activities for the County's Emergency Operations Center or EOC.



The Santa Rosa County EOC was built in 1998. It serves as the **central location where representatives of local government and private sector agencies convene during disaster situations to make decisions.** It was built to withstand 150 MPH winds and is fully equipped with manual shutters and doors and two generators that are tested weekly.

Activations do not only happen during hurricane season. Incidents including tornadoes, wildfires, flooding, extreme cold or heat, transportation accidents, pandemics, and chemical or terrorist threats could all trigger an activation.

There are three levels of activation:

Level III: Monitoring- Selected agencies are notified that would take action as part of daily activities. The EOC is staff by the emergency communications center and other division of emergency management personnel.

Level II: Partial Activation- All primary agencies that man the EOC are notified. The EOC is staffed by emergency management personnel and selected EOC staff.

Level I: Full Scale Activation

- All Emergency Management personnel and primary and support Emergency Support Functions are activated within the EOC.



What Happens at Emergency Management During a Storm?

72 Hours Before an Anticipated Storm Hit

- ✓ The emergency management director notifies the board of county commissioners of the situation through the county administrator.
- ✓ A local emergency declaration may be declared in accordance with the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.
- ✓ Evacuation routes will be reviewed, problem areas identified and appropriate actions taken.
- ✓ Dissemination of targeted public information will begin.

48 Hours Before an Anticipated Storm Hit

- ✓ Emergency Operations Center activated at the appropriate level and a full briefing between all EOC agencies is conducted.
- ✓ American Red Cross of Northwest Florida and Santa Rosa County Department of Health will begin preparation for possible shelter openings.
- ✓ Personnel will be placed on standby and assignment to teams confirmed.
- ✓ Personnel having responsibilities during the storm will be sent home to prepare their families and property while maintaining adequate EOC manning.
- ✓ All campgrounds, recreational parks and mobile home parks will be directly advised to start hurricane preparedness and prepare for evacuation.
- ✓ Coordination commences concerning evacuation on decisions with Escambia, Florida; Escambia, Alabama, and Okaloosa counties emergency management.

24 Hours Before an Anticipated Storm Hit

- ✓ Evacuation of designated areas will begin subject to location, category and speed of the hurricane. Actual time to commence evacuation will be determined by Emergency Management Director in coordination with local law enforcement and neighboring counties. All mobile home residents will be advised to evacuate regardless of location.
- ✓ Authorities will ensure the Division of Emergency Management and the Public Information Officer are informed of government office and school closures.
- ✓ Shelters will be opened to adequately handle evacuees.
- ✓ All Emergency Management personnel including Emergency Operations Center volunteers report to assignments as directed.
- ✓ Special needs evacuation will begin.
- ✓ Available aircraft will evacuate as conditions warrant.

12 Hours Before an Anticipated Storm Hit

- ✓ EOC is fully activated with all designated representatives present.
- ✓ All non-essential personnel should be departing from evacuation area. Essential personnel will evacuate as conditions warrant, to be completed no later than the arrival of tropical force winds.

Arrival of Tropical Storm Force Winds

- ✓ All emergency vehicles are staged in appropriate locations and to ensure the safety of first responders, are not moved until the possibility of storm force winds (39-73 mph) has passed.



Santa Rosa County Emergency Management uses four phases to prepare for and respond to disasters.



What is an ESF?

An ESF, or Emergency Support Function, consolidates multiple agencies that perform similar or like functions into a single cohesive unit to allow for better management of emergency response functions. These functions represent specific response activities that are common to all disasters. Each Emergency Support Function is comprised of one or more primary agency (ies) serving as the lead and several other agencies and organizations providing support. The ESF concept was developed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in the late 1980's. In Santa Rosa County and throughout Florida, 15 of the 18 ESFs fall under one of four branches in the Operations Section: Emergency Services, Human Services, Infrastructure Support and Operations Support

ESF 1 - Transportation
 ESF 2 - Communications
 ESF 3 - Public Works & Engineering
 ESF 4 - Firefighting
 ESF 5 - Information Planning
 ESF 6 - Mass Care
 ESF 7 - Resource Support
 ESF 8 - Health & Medical Services
 ESF 9 - Search & Rescue

ESF 10 - Hazmat
 ESF 11 - Food & Water
 ESF 12 - Energy
 ESF 13 - Military Support
 ESF 14 - Public Information
 ESF 15 - Volunteers & Donations
 ESF 16 - Law Enforcement & Security
 ESF 17 - Animal Protection & Agriculture
 ESF 18 - Business & Infrastructure